

unpunctuated sentences out of context. However, it remains an open question whether the semantic and pragmatic context in which local ambiguities occur will always be rich enough to resolve such ambiguities and, therefore, whether parsing strategies play no role in comprehension. Crain and Steedmans' paper also addresses the issue of the overall organisation of the language comprehension system: they argue for 'weak interaction' in which the parser proposes analyses which are either accepted or rejected on semantic and pragmatic grounds.

Several papers are concerned with the evaluation of syntactic theories both from the perspective of descriptive adequacy and parsability. Joshi (Chapter 6), in his second contribution, argues that Tree Adjoining Grammars are 'mildly' context-sensitive and have the right properties with respect to both measures. In the process, he provides a useful comparison of a number of recent syntactic theories in terms of formal language theory. Karttunen and Kay (Chapter 8) present an analysis of Finnish word order within the framework of Kay's Functional Unification Grammar and argue that the functionalist perspective of this theory allows an insightful statement of the various discourse factors which affect order in a relatively syntactically free word order language. Their paper also provides a convincing demonstration of the value of a computational tool such as a generator in the development of grammatical analyses.

Most of the remaining papers are written from a psycholinguistic perspective and, although they contain a greater amount of theoretical discussion than would be normal in most journals, some of this discussion is of little value because broad and unfalsifiable outlines of the language understanding system are treated as testable theories. Tannenhaus, Carlson and Seidenberg (Chapter 11) report some ingenious experimental work designed to test the reality of linguistically-defined levels of representation. However, they equate the claim that such representations are real with the modularity hypothesis and use their results as a basis for comparison of Marslen-Wilson's parallel, interactive and Forster's serial, autonomous accounts of language comprehension. Garnham (1985: 186f) and others have demonstrated that neither account is specific enough to be empirically distinguishable. When more psycholinguists begin to apply experimental methodology to the rigorous and falsifiable theories of parsing in evidence in other portions of this book, there will be a genuine multi-disciplinary research programme on language comprehension.

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**Terence McKay**, *Infinitival complements in German: lassen, scheinen and the verbs of perception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985. Pp. viii + 231. **Jindrich Toman**, *Studies in German grammar*. Foris: Dordrecht, 1985. Pp. x + 447.

1985 saw the publication of these two important volumes on German written in the Government-Binding framework. Given the rather different set up of the works I shall review them separately here.

Toman's volume makes accessible a number of articles which had only been available in manuscript form before and most of which have a central place in generative research on German syntax. In addition, there are a number of papers on word formation which will, it is hoped, stimulate further research in this area. The book also has a very interesting introduction sketching the development of generative studies in Germany. To start with the latter point, Toman examines the institutional problems responsible for the relatively slow development of the generative tradition in Germany. He stresses 'the absence of a permanent centre which would provide a balanced combination of both research and education of students' (1) coupled with the fact that (as is the case in many other European countries) universities serve primarily to prepare students for secondary school teaching. Note in passing, though, that such adverse

factors are also present in Holland, a country where generative linguistics flourishes. He also mentions the cultural, or perhaps psychological, problem that some people working in the generative framework tend to get depressed by the ever-changing nature of the model and in their search for 'stability' satisfy themselves with some version of the theory at some stage of development. In addition, some linguists feel too constrained by a theory that tends to exclude from its focus of attention a range of observations which one might 'naively' consider to be linguistic. Finally, there is a lingering reluctance to adopt a theoretical framework that uses as its primary material the linguist's intuitions. The problems touched upon by Toman have indeed alienated many from the generative approach and still do so to this day. However, as Newmeyer's survey of linguistic theory (1981) and his discussion of grammatical theory in general (1983) shows, these problems are not restricted to Germany.

Concerning the content of generative research, Toman highlights the departure from an analysis of German modelled closely on that proposed for English to one that is centred on the specific properties of Germanic. He concentrates his discussion on the theme of German word-order. Coupled with Olsen's paper in the volume (133–163), Toman's survey will give anyone working in the field a sense of the historical dimension of linguistics. The introduction is followed by a collection of texts on German syntax and word formation by various authors. There is no space here to go into a detailed discussion of the claims put forward in each of the papers. In fact, this seems to be redundant since most papers have been circulating in manuscript form for years and have been discussed elsewhere, which is one of the drawbacks of the volume. To illustrate with one case: Olsen's article on word order patterns in German gives a useful survey of successive analyses of the Verb-Second phenomenon and then sketches the author's own approach in terms of case assignment to the subject. It is a pity, however, that the paper does not allude to other recent proposals. Holmberg's work on Swedish and English finite clauses, for instance, offers an alternative explanation in terms of the headedness of S. Though not included in Olsen's own references, Holmberg's paper is listed in the final reference section. The paper that seems to suffer least from time lag is Lenerz' historical study of German word order. Lenerz offers a careful study of the data (based on a corpus of historical texts) and a treatment of them in terms of reanalysis. It is surprising, though, that his bibliography does not mention Lightfoot's work on diachronic syntax in the generative framework.

I think it is fair to say that the syntax section is mainly 'of historical interest'. The selection of papers seems rather arbitrary, including a range of crucial topics (Verb Second, Case, Empty Subjects) but only partly touching on another classic issue in Germanic syntax: that of S-final Verb Clusters. The section on word formation suffers from the same drawbacks: Fanselow's paper dates from 1983, Hohle's and Reis's from 1982/3 and they have not been brought up to date. This is not to deny the fact that we find here very deserving attempts to illuminate some problems in word formation and that in this way this publication may stimulate further research. One can in general regret that the publication of these seminal papers on syntax and word formation comes so late and in this relatively unrevised form. It seems to me that such a form of publication cannot do justice to the impact that the papers have had. It is also a pity that this late publication has not eliminated a large number of misprints throughout the book.

McKay's work analyses the complementation of *scheinen*, *lassen* and the perception verbs in German. The author focuses on the syntactic ambivalence of such constructions. Consider, for instance:

- (1) Ich hörte ihn sich erschiessen  
'I heard him shoot himself'.

The finite parallel of this sentence provides us with arguments for considering this to be a biclausal structure:

- (2) Ich hörte dass er sich erschoss  
'I heard that he shot himself'.

But there are also arguments favouring a monoclausal analysis. The negative element *nicht*, for instance, may occur between the subordinate verb and its complements but still take scope over the matrix verb:

- (3) Weil Peter sie *nicht* reinkommen hörte  
Because Peter her not come in heard  
'because Peter did not hear her enter'

After a brief sketch of GB-theory (1–11), McKay provides a detailed description of the ambivalent syntactic behaviour of the constructions considered, paying attention to phenomena such as scope, reflexivization, extraposition, pied piping and clitic movement (12–307). His second chapter surveys previous approaches, starting with Bech (1957) and leading up to work published in the eighties. The best known analysis is undoubtedly that by Evers (1975), who proposes that at D-structure there is a bi-clausal structure. The transformation V-raising adjoins the embedded V to the matrix V, thus creating a V-cluster and pruning reduces the bi-clausal structure to a monoclausal one.

- (4) D-S. Weil Cecilia [[die Kraniche zu filmen] behauptete]  
 Since Cecilia the cranes to film maintained  
 'since Cecilia maintained that she had filmed the cranes'  
 S-S. Weil Cecilia [die Kraniche [zu filmen behauptete]].

It is important to add that Evers' analysis is crucially based on Dutch data. While V-raising in German does not give rise to surface reordering, in Dutch it results in the reordering in the V-cluster:

- (5) D.S. Omdat Cecilia [de kraanvogels te filmen] beweerde  
 Because Cecilia the cranes to film maintained  
 S.S. Omdat Cecilia de kraanvogels [beweerde te filmen]

This contrast between Dutch and German is enough for McKay to discard Evers analysis as inapplicable to German.

From Chapter 3 onwards McKay offers an alternative analysis. In essence it is very simple and therefore attractive. He proposes that *scheinen*, *lassen* and the perception verbs are  $\bar{S}$ -deleters, like their English counterparts. The non-extractability of the complement clauses follows from independent principles (ECP and Case) and the same principles rule out S-pied-piping, topicalization, left/right dislocation, clefting and pseudo-clefting. Chapter 4 concentrates on empty subjects as in

- (6) Emma läst – dem Kind das Fahrrad schenken  
 Emma lets to the child the bicycle give

Adopting and modifying an analysis of Safir (published in the Toman volume), McKay suggests that the empty subject (marked by the dash) is the empty element *pro*, co-superscripted with the VP-internal NP *das Fahrrad* in order to guarantee that the latter NP gets case. (Not having an external argument, *schenken* itself will not assign case to its complement.) *pro* is thus an expletive like English *there*, though it is different in that it does not create a definiteness effect:

- (7) Emma last *pro*<sup>1</sup> dem Kind das Fahrrad<sup>1</sup> schenken

McKay fails to explain this difference.

By assuming that expletives cannot be SUBJECT for the Binding Theory McKay accounts for the reflexivisation as in (8):

- (8) Hans lasst *pro*<sup>1</sup> sich Schnaps<sup>1</sup> besorgen  
 Hans<sup>1</sup> lets to himself<sup>1</sup> Schnaps bring

As it stands the analysis is remarkably simple and effective. It is well presented and McKay manages to include a consideration of the crucial facts of Germanic syntax: the V-2 phenomenon, the dative-nominative orderings (cf den Besten's paper published in the Toman volume), reflexivisation, etc. The analysis does, however, have the disadvantage that the data discussed are narrow. It will have to be amended in an important way to handle the Dutch examples treated by Evers (cf. (5)). Here the reordering does motivate a different analysis, as McKay himself grants (34). A further extension of the data to patterns found in Züritütsch and West Flemish (cf. Haegeman & Van Riemsdijk, 1986) would have revealed that the  $\bar{S}$ -deletion analysis cannot encompass the facts, and would have revealed the obvious advantages of an analysis in terms of reanalysis. Since McKay has to admit some forms of reanalysis in the discussion in the last chapter anyway, such an analysis is in principle not excluded.

Nonetheless, I think that this work is a very useful introduction to the analysis of complementation in German, even if the limited scope of the work has prevented the author from offering an even more stimulating and far-reaching analysis. It illustrates how generative

## SHORTER NOTICES

research on German syntax is still developing and rests firmly on the tradition established by works such as those published in the Toman volume.

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Anna Siewierska. *The passive. A comparative linguistic analysis*. London: Croom Helm, 1984. Pp. 306

This book, a revision of a 1979 Monash M.A. thesis, contains a discussion of the so-called passive construction in a variety of languages from various points of view. The author bases her discussion on a vast quantity of, mainly recent, books and articles on the subject, the majority of which are written in English: as a consequence, the book is also a critical examination of recent studies on the passive. It is not written within a particular theoretical framework and both formal and functional approaches are taken into account. It has three indexes (languages, names and terms).

The Introduction is devoted to a number of problematic aspects of the notion 'passive'. It starts out with one of the main issues of the book, namely the question of how to define the passive in such a way that one knows what one is talking about without excluding a large number of expressions which are normally taken as passive in the literature. Two elements appear to be fundamental (as is stated in the summary, p. 256): (a) the existence of an active counterpart and (b) the involvement in the bringing about of the action of a participant that is not the subject of the passive. The difficulty of defining the passive goes hand in hand with the difficulty of defining the notions of 'subject' and 'transitivity' in such a way that they can be used for cross-linguistic discussion. Throughout the book the author shows that the notion of 'transitivity' is especially problematic, since it is both used for the definition of the passive and itself defined by reference to the possibility of passivization. Furthermore, the Introduction contains a discussion of the way the passive is dealt with in a number of contemporary linguistic theories.

The 'personal passive' is the topic of the second chapter. The author shows how languages may differ with respect to the semantic function of subjects of passive sentences, restrictions on the expression of the Agent or on the type of Agent, and formal correlates of the passive such as word order, case assignment, and verbal morphology. The second part of this chapter discusses the relationship between transitivity and passivisation, with particular reference to the problem of how to account for passives of ditransitive verbs and expressions like *This bed was slept in by George Washington* when regarded as the passive of a corresponding intransitive active. In this connection recent proposals within Relational Grammar and the notion 'affect' as developed by Bolinger and others receive ample discussion. A separate paragraph deals with the passive in Philippine languages, where the author argues that the non-actor focus clauses are indeed passive.

In the third chapter, on 'impersonal passives', special attention is given to the status of dummy subjects such as *er* and *es* in Dutch and German, which, according to Siewierska, I think rightly, are not to be taken as subjects at all, to the difference between impersonal passives and indefinite active subjects like German *man* (which other linguists appear to have described as passives!) and to the demotional function of the passive, where the author follows Keenan and Comrie as against Relational Grammar.